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www.unioncountyhistoricalsociety.org

News! Spring - Summer 2019

“Exploring Union County’s past to inform the present and future.”

UNION COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY PROGRAMS

"Women of Weikert" by Emilie Freer Jansma
Saturday, May 18 from 12 noon - 2

at the Public Library for Union County, 255 Reitz Boulevard, Lewisburg, PA 17837

Emilie is well-recognized as a local historian, folklorist and rural sociologist, with a 46 year-long interest in the West End of Union County. Her recent work, *Women of Weikert*, is a compilation of information on women residing at Weikert, Union County, since the days of the settlers. Emilie has also published *The Community of Weikert, PA: Cabins and Camps, Homes and Homesteads* that traces ownership of 230 properties, and she has written for the *Millmont Times*.

The program is free and open to the public. Call the library at 570-523-1172 to reserve your place.

TOURS AND EXHIBITS



The **Dale-Engle-Walker House** – witness to local, state and national history since its construction c.1793 – will open for tours during the summer. New to the site is a restored c.1789 log cabin.

Tours include an exhibit on the **Pennsylvania House Furniture Company**.

Started in 1887 by Horace Cawley as the Lewisburg Furniture Co., the business produced quality chairs and cabinetry under various owners, despite several fires and financial problems over the years. In the early 2000s, the company succumbed to competition from low-cost imports, a take-over and subsequent sale of the “brand.” Despite local and state efforts, the factory in Lewisburg was closed and the buildings demolished.

Information on tours and programs is posted on our website: www.unioncountyhistoricalsociety.org. Please be sure we have your email address so we can send you advance notices and updates. Historical society programs are supported by a Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission grant, and by your membership.

Very Successful Showing of Documentary Film on Alvira

The historical society Outreach Committee offered a showing of the movie *Surrender: The Sudden Death of Alvira, Pennsylvania*, on March 31 at the Campus Theatre in Lewisburg. The documentary was created by Stephen and Martha Huddy. We sold 308 tickets, effectively a sell out of the Campus Theatre.

Following the movie, we held a “meet and greet” session, at Barnes & Noble Community Room. Paul Metzger, author of the just-released book *Deeds of the Valley: The Land that Became the Ordnance*, which traces the history of Alvira prior to the U.S. government’s seizure of the town, was joined by Stephen Huddy for the discussion.

We thank Jacqui Barone of the Campus Theatre; Jason Cassidy, Department Manager at Barnes & Noble for arranging the “meet and greet”; and Roberta Greene, Director of the Union County Libraries (Lewisburg, Mifflinburg, and Laurelton) and Jed Stalker, Director of the Milton Public Library for their agreement to put up posters and sell tickets for us.



Stone Church, Alvira

Deeds of the Valley: The Land that Became the Ordnance by Paul Metzger is available for purchase at the UCHS office. Supplies are limited. Order on-line on our website, or visit the office.



OFFICERS & BOARD 2019

- Bruce Teeple, President
- Doug Hovey, Vice President
- Barb Franck, Secretary
- Jeff Reber Treasurer
- Phyllis Dyer
- Mary Kay Harper
- Louise Knight
- Mike Molesevich
- Eli Reiff
- Jeffrey Spotts
- Kathy Swope
- Jennifer Tull
- Matt Wagner

The Nominations Subcommittee has recommended the following for the August 2019 election for the Board: Mike Molesevich for the remainder of a 2-year vacancy; and Mary Kay Harper, Darren Rhyne and Bruce Teeple for the three 3-year positions.



Welcome new members

- Rodney & Mary Jane Elser of Lewisburg
- Joanne Schrawder of West Milton
- Christine Sperling of Lewisburg
- and new life member**
- Theresa Bzdil of Mifflinburg

The society is grateful for donations from

- Marion Wohlhieter, Andover, MA
- Rodney & Mary Jane Elser and Marj Kastner of Lewisburg

Thanks to our volunteers

- who staff the office on Fridays: Glenda Sheaffer and Tom Greaves; who organized our very successful “Surrender” film showing: Louise Knight, Phyllis Dyer, Matt Wagner, Dan Bower, John Bower, Michelle & Bruce Teeple; and who helped at the Spring Dinner/ Program: Dan Bower, Jeff Reber, Michelle & Bruce Teeple.

Dear Society Members and Friends,

Visitors at the Dale-Engle-Walker House occasionally ask, “Why isn’t this place preserved and decorated as a historic house museum?” Answering that question isn’t difficult; more importantly, though, it allows everyone to see how and why caretakers make certain decisions.

For over two hundred years, numerous families lived in this house. When the Union County Historical Society assumed ownership, the board realized that installing another slate roof was cost-prohibitive, so they replaced it instead with a raised-ridge metal roof. We obviously aren’t tearing out the furnace and heating the house with wood burned in the Dales’ fireplaces. There’s no point in ripping out the wiring either, just because the Engles didn’t get electricity until 1952. And visitors probably won’t return if we ask them to use outhouses instead of indoor toilets.

As you can see, there’s always a decision to make. Fortunately, we have two useful tools.

The first is our mission statement: “exploring Union County’s past to inform the present and future.” It’s succinct and it’s memorable. Anyone reading it can understand why we exist, what we do, and why we do it; it also gives people a reason to care. Whenever we need to resolve an issue, the first question to ask is, “Does this action help us fulfill the mission?” A mission statement serves several purposes. It’s our referee, our insurance policy, our anchor to reality, our grip on sanity, and our lifeline to the community.

The second tool is the path recommended by public historians: “balance preservation with use.” Over twenty years ago, that group realized how historical societies wasted too much time, money and energy riding a merry-go-round, vainly grabbing for two brass rings: professional accreditation and listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Consultants pushing a “one-size-fits-all” approach often ignored a region’s fragile webs of memory and connection. Others made decisions guided by an erroneous definition of “museum quality.” This term, borrowed from the art world, promoted a misguided, though well-intentioned, vision at the expense of a site’s actual story. This eventually threatened historical societies as they became divorced from their surrounding communities.

To set a clear course for the future, leaders in the field published the New Orleans Charter. This philosophy jettisoned older theories founded on rigid principles and began emphasizing flexible, graduated standards and practices. Historic sites gradually abandoned marketing models based on heritage tourism. Today’s focus promotes education, resilience and, above all else, community engagement. Without that, the entire operation loses any meaning or purpose; in short, it risks losing its soul.

UCHS’s strength comes from balancing and satisfying the needs of our collections, buildings, surroundings, visitors and neighbors. Think of it as one more way to avoid becoming a “hysterical” society.

Bruce Teeple

The Union County Historical Society office and library welcomes members and visitors

Monday through Friday 8:30 to 4:30 – located in the county courthouse, 103 S. 2nd Street, Lewisburg. Members have free use of society library resources. Non-members are asked for a donation of \$5/day. On-site research assistance is available for all those visiting the UCHS office.

Genealogical research services are offered for those who can not come to the office. Please email your research questions first. We will advise.

- Fees:**
- General genealogical search (one family) – \$50 includes copying up to 20 pages of documents. Extensive searches requiring additional time /fees can be arranged.
 - Probate search for will, letters of administration, orphans court record – \$5 plus 50¢/copied page
 - Obituary search and copy (must know year and approximate month of death) – \$5 per person
 - Deed searches are negotiated on an individual basis. Please inquire.

See www.unioncountyhistoricalsociety.org / Research Resources for documents list and more.

Added to the library:

The Chronicle, Volume XXX, Spring 2019. Journal of the Historical Society of the Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church. Discusses the development of United Methodism in central and northeast PA from 1773, including ministers and historic sites.

Milton, Pennsylvania 1909: Milton Evening Standard Souvenir. Donated by Mary Belle Lontz.

Donations of Union County family histories (printed or digital) are accepted for the society's library.

Recent Genealogy Searches and Their Researchers

If you have information to share, please contact UCHS or the researcher (address and/or email below)

FARLEY: Melissa Carpenter, melcarpenter355@gmail.com

BROWN, McCLURE: Karen Christian, kkch283@gmail.com

BAKER, LONG: Tom Finsterbush, 1770 Penns Creek, Rd., Mifflinburg, PA 17844, 570-490-3728

RENTSCHLER, John: James G. Bigwood, jgbigwood@gmail.com

WERT: Philip H. Scaglione, ortho300@verizon.net

BOLANDER: Denys Allen, 11 Fawn Dr., Reading, PA; coachdenys@gmail.com

REAM, AURAND: Deborah Lalonde, PO Box 1958, Brooksville, FL 34605; 352-206-0108; labdebi@gmail.com

ELLIS, Henry (Guffy) + Bertha Huff, seeking cemetery info. Steve Guffy, alexguf1753@gmail.com

SARVIS, Moses d.1851 Union County, PA (+ Mary Ann d. 1855 Union County); Johnson Sarvis 1808 PA-1889 CO; Christopher Johnson 1752 NJ-1838 (+ M. Sarah P. Everitt 1752 NJ-1833 Union County): Beth Goetzman, beth.goetzman@morganstanley.com

CHAPPEL, Asa (Isaac) 1807-1892 + Elizabeth Kunkle 1812-1893, White Deer: Ann Mueller, ammraleigh@gmail.com

NEVEL, ZECHMAN /SECHMAN, VAUGHN, Wm Nevel 1847-1879, Susan Sechman b. c.1845, I. (Isaac) Edward Nevel b. 1862 or 1872; Lawrence Nevel c.1875-1969 + Sarah 1879-1968: Robert Vaughan, rcvaughan93@gmail.com

CLEMENS, BURROWS (BOROUGHES), BRYANT [New Berlin, Snyder, Mifflin, and Juniata counties]: Bridgette Jreige, bjreige@gmail.com

IDDINGS, Henry (his will): John Kraft, jkraftsr@gmail.com

ROTHRUFF: Judith Mente, 2625 E. Southern Ave, C60, Tempe, AZ 85282; mentejudith@gmail.com

BLAKE'S TENT, Route 45, Lewisburg, seeking photo: Adele Benson, d61736b@comcast.net

LOCAL QUILTS, Oral Traditions project: Christine Sperling, csperlin@ptd.net

EARLY BANDS: Matt Wagner, retired band director from Mifflinburg, is looking for photographs and information related to early bands in New Columbia, Kelly Crossroads, Allenwood, White Deer, and West Milton for a book he is writing. If you can help with this project, please contact Matt at 570-850-3981 or mcwagner.mcw@gmail.com.

COLLECTION NEWS by Tony Shively

The Archives /Museum Committee of the Union County Historical Society fosters the collection of Union County manuscripts, ephemera, local advertising, and decorative arts through gift and purchase.

The Archives Committee of the Union County Historical Society would like to recognize and thank the following individuals for their recent donations:

Ethel Snook of Lewisburg for donating postcards, photographs and slides from 1964 through 1975 era that were taken in and around Lewisburg (including flood scenes along the Susquehanna River); Bucknell University; Mifflinburg; and R. B. Winter State Park.

Marion Jacobson of Lewisburg for donating “Tycoon,” the board game of Lewisburg (similar to Monopoly); Union County Historical Society calendars from 1976, 1980, 1982, and 1985; an *Atlas of Union & Snyder Counties* (reprint); a book entitled *Lewisburg* which includes the history of the 19th century architecture in the borough; and a recreational map of North Central Pennsylvania.

Rod and Mary Jane Elser of Lewisburg for donating numerous late 18th through mid 19th century items including a yarn winder (engraved HR 1789); a splint bottom rocking chair; two hay knives; ten fireplace cooking implements including ladles, forks, strainer, toaster etc.; three large hand wrought hinges (30 inches long); one splint-bottom chair; a brass bucket with wrought iron swing handle; and a 19th century wooden floor plane.

Lois Huffines of Lewisburg for donating a clock produced in honor of the 100th anniversary of the Lewisburg Club.

John Poss of Gastonia, NC for donating an envelope postmarked 1881 and addressed to Attorney A.A. Leiser of Lewisburg.

Carol Thomas of Lewisburg for donating a framed print of the Pennsylvania Railroad Station and Baker house that were located on North 2nd Street in Lewisburg.

Donald Machamer of Lewisburg for donating photographs of the fire that burned the C. Dreisbach and Sons Wholesale building at the corner of N. 4th and Market Street in Lewisburg.

Janice Schrawder of West Milton for donating a book, *Pennsylvania Caves* by Ralph Stone, and an old wooden measuring tool found in the attic of a Lewisburg home.

Clyde Gass of Milton for donating a photograph of a B. O. Daubert employee picnic at Half Way Dam and a photograph of Martin Stahl, Freight Agent at the Reading Railroad Station.

Robert Swartz of West Milton for donating numerous items relative to the Union County Sabbath (Sunday) School Association including Annual Conventions pamphlets from 1905 as well as those covering the period from the 1940's through the 1990's; handwritten minutes from the 1909 (37th Annual Convention) held at the Beaver Memorial Methodist Church in Lewisburg, and dozens of black and white photographs of U. C. S. S. Association activities and events that were taken by Union County Journal Photographer, Elwood Moyer.

Blanche Wagner of Milton for donating a WWII era envelope containing a letter and photograph.

Kurt J. Weist of Harrisburg for donating a noteworthy collection of historical papers and material relative to the family of Christian Van Gundy and Ludwig Derr; as well as correspondence from Mrs. Lewis Theiss.

Dorothy L. Bowersox Genealogical Collection

The Society accepted Larry Bowersox's significant donation of genealogical material and Bowersox family history, compiled by his mother, Dorothy (LeVier) Bowersox. Union County was a starting place for Bowersox history in the US, and a logical place to house Mrs. Bowersox's reference material. The Collection includes Bowersox family material, Pennsylvania county histories, immigration lists, will indexes, marriage and death indexes for central Pennsylvania and surrounding counties, and Ohio.

We are pleased to house this collection in a special bookcase at our office/library.

COLLECTION NEWS

These postcards of the Bucknell University Vaughn Literature building (top), Lewisburg High School (middle) as well as the bottom photo of flooding in Lewisburg in March 1964 were a recent donation from Ethel Snook.

The society welcomes donations of local postcards and photographs.



From the Editor of ACCOUNTS of Union County History

ACCOUNTS of Union County History is the Union County Historical Society's online journal of local history. Our purpose is to provide a place to record articles and stories from anyone who has a knowledge of Union County history, so that that information doesn't become lost to us. ACCOUNTS is an opportunity to contribute to Union County's historical record.

Do you have a topic you'd like to develop into an article? Please contact Matt Wagner at mcwagner.mcw@gmail.com or 570-850-3981 with your idea. Even if you have an idea but aren't sure how to get started writing an article, contact me and I'll be happy to help you develop your idea. If you're a bit rusty on your writing, I can help you. You can rough something out and we'll work together to get it ready. You can even write your story longhand and I'll type it up for you.

We are hoping to publish the next issue of ACCOUNTS by the end of June.

Matt Wagner



REQUEST to MEMBERS

When you are "temporarily away" the US Post Office will not hold or forward UCHS letters and newsletters – they are returned to us with postage due. To help us keep in touch with you, and reduce cost to members, please call us at 570-524-8666 or email us at info@unioncountyhistoricalsociety.org to let us know when we can stop and then continue corresponding via mail.

Remember, we are happy to reach out by email when we have your email address.

Union County Historical Society

Union County Courthouse

103 South Second Street

Lewisburg, PA 17837

Return Service Requested

Membership in the Union County Historical Society supports programs, the research library, and the growth of our collection of Union County photos, postcards, documents, and items made by Union County crafts people. Membership helps maintain the 1793 Dale-Engle-Walker House, which offers tours, exhibits, and programs. The Union County Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations; membership is tax deductible as allowed by law. In addition to membership, donations specific to the Society's work: education, the collection, genealogy, the Dale Library or the Dale-Engle-Walker property, are gratefully accepted. Volunteers are welcome. **Member benefits** include the biennial Heritage book, newsletters, a discount on society publications, and free use of our extensive reference library of local and regional documents, family histories, and access to on-line resources.

New, renewing, and gift memberships: please mail this form to:
Union County Historical Society, 103 S. 2nd St., Lewisburg, PA 17837

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Membership level:

Lifetime (individual) \$500

Annual: Patron \$150 Contributor \$100 Supporter \$50 Individual \$35 Student (K-12) \$10

Please visit www.unioncountyhistoricalsociety.org for events, articles, resource list, and more.